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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/015,154	12/11/2001	Thomas J. Blong	57385US002	6178

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EXAMINER

NOLAN, SANDRA M

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1772

DATE MAILED: 04/04/2003

6

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

AS-6

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/015,154

Applicant(s)

BLONG, THOMAS J.

Examiner

Sandra M. Nolan

Art Unit

1772

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-40 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 31-40 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-30 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on ____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on ____ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 2,3,5.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Election/Restrictions

1. Restriction to one of the following inventions is required under 35 U.S.C. 121:
 - I. Claims 1-30, drawn to compositions and articles, classified in class 428, subclass 35.7.
 - II. Claims, drawn to processes for extruding, classified in class 264, subclass (unknown).

2. The inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I (i.e., the compositions of Group I) and III are related as mutually exclusive species in an intermediate-final product relationship. Distinctness is proven for claims in this relationship if the intermediate product is useful to make other than the final product (MPEP § 806.04(b), 3rd paragraph), and the species are patentably distinct (MPEP § 806.04(h)). In the instant case, the intermediate product is deemed to be useful as a coating material and the inventions are deemed patentably distinct since there is nothing on this record to show them to be obvious variants. Should applicant traverse on the ground that the species are not patentably distinct, applicant should submit evidence or identify such evidence now of record showing the species to be obvious variants or clearly admit on the record that this is the case. In either instance, if the examiner finds one of the inventions anticipated by the prior art, the evidence or admission may be used in a rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) of the other invention.

Inventions II and I (i.e., the articles of Group I) are related as process of making and product made. The inventions are distinct if either or both of the following can be

shown: (1) that the process as claimed can be used to make other and materially different product or (2) that the product as claimed can be made by another and materially different process (MPEP § 806.05(f)). In the instant case the processes can be used to make articles that do not contain fluoropolymers.

3. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

4. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Group I is not required for Group II, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

5. Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art because of their recognized divergent subject matter, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

6. During a telephone conversation with Mr. Dean Harts on 01 April 2003 a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of Group I, claims 1-30.

7. Affirmation of this election must be made by applicant in replying to this Office action. Claims 31-40 are withdrawn from further consideration by the examiner, 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a non-elected invention.

Information Disclosure Statement

8. The information disclosure statements (IDS's) submitted on 08 March 2002 (Paper No. 2), 02 August 2002 (Paper No. 3) and 19 February 2003 (Paper No. 5) were considered by the examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

9. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

10. Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The claim states what the second polymer is when the first polymer is (b) or (c), but says nothing about the cases in which the first polymer is (a) or (d). Can the compositions/articles contain two polymer (a)'s? Two polymer (d)'s?

Please clarify the claims.

11. Claims 3-5, 7, 9-11, 13, 15, 17-20 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

What do the abbreviated terms mean?

Please clarify the claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

12. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

W 13. Claims 1 and 12-18, 21, 29 and 30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Blong et al (US 5,710,217).

Blong teaches films (see claim 11 of the patent) made by extruding a mixture of a thermoplastic polymer and one or more semicrystalline or amorphous (col. 7, lines 38-39) fluoropolymers (col. 8, line 12) that contain tetrafluoroethylene (TFE) and hexafluoropropylene (HFP) (col. 8, lines 13-15) optionally copolymerized with partially fluorinated monomers, such as those described at col. 6, lines 21+). Fluoropolymers containing the partially fluorinated monomers are used with thermoplastic polymers in melt processable compositions (col. 2, lines 38+).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

14. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

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15. The factual inquiries set forth in *Graham v. John Deere Co.*, 383 U.S. 1, 148 USPQ 459 (1966), that are applied for establishing a background for determining obviousness under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) are summarized as follows:

1. Determining the scope and contents of the prior art.
2. Ascertaining the differences between the prior art and the claims at issue.
3. Resolving the level of ordinary skill in the pertinent art.
4. Considering objective evidence present in the application indicating obviousness or nonobviousness.

W 16. Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Blong.

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). For applications filed on or after November 29, 1999, this rejection might also be overcome by showing that the subject matter of the reference and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned

by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person. See MPEP § 706.02(I)(1) and § 706.02(I)(2).

Blong is discussed above. It fails to teach all of the comonomer ranges along with the specific comonomers recited in applicant's claims.

It would have been obvious at the time that the invention was made to employ suitable amounts and types of comonomers in the production of the copolymers of Blong in order to improve the processability of compositions/articles employing them.

The motivation to employ the amounts and types of comonomers claimed by applicants when making the fluoropolymers of Blong is found at col. 2, lines 38+ of Blong, where the melt processability of compositions containing thermoplastic polymers and one or more fluoropolymers containing such monomers is discussed.

It is deemed desirable to employ melt processable compositions to make articles, such as films, in order to facilitate/simplify the production of same.

W 17. Claims 1-30 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Parsonage et al (US 6,117,508).

The applied reference has a common inventor with the instant application. Based upon the earlier effective U.S. filing date of the reference, it constitutes prior art only under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). This rejection under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) might be overcome by: (1) a showing under 37 CFR 1.132 that any invention disclosed but not claimed in the reference was derived from the inventor of this application and is thus not an invention "by another"; (2) a showing of a date of invention for the claimed subject matter of the application which corresponds to subject matter disclosed but not claimed

in the reference, prior to the effective U.S. filing date of the reference under 37 CFR 1.131; or (3) an oath or declaration under 37 CFR 1.130 stating that the application and reference are currently owned by the same party and that the inventor named in the application is the prior inventor under 35 U.S.C. 104, together with a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 CFR 1.321(c). For applications filed on or after November 29, 1999, this rejection might also be overcome by showing that the subject matter of the reference and the claimed invention were, at the time the invention was made, owned by the same person or subject to an obligation of assignment to the same person. See MPEP § 706.02(I)(1) and § 706.02(I)(2).

Parsonage teaches the production of composite laminated articles, such as tubing (col. 1, line 48), that are made from blends of VDF copolymers (col. 4, lines 30+) with HFP/TFE copolymers with ethylene (col. 6, lines 14+, especially line 29). The articles made have improved peel strength (abstract).

It fails to teach the exact amounts of monomers used in the copolymers claimed here.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time that the invention was made to employ suitable amounts of the monomers used in making the copolymers of Parsonage in its blends in order to produce laminates having improved peel strengths.

The motivation to employ suitable amounts of Parsonage's monomers in its copolymers is found in its abstract, where the improved peel strengths of its composites is taught.

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It is deemed desirable to make composites having improved peel strengths in order to improve the useful life of tubing made therewith.

The amorphous/semicrystalline character of the Parsonage copolymers would be inherent therein, given their chemical similarity to the copolymers in applicant's claims.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to the Examiner, Sandra M. Nolan, whose telephone number is 703/308-9545. The Examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, from 6:30 am to 4:00 pm, Eastern Time.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, her supervisor, Harold Pyon, can be reached at 703/308-4251. The general fax number for the art unit is 703/305-5436. The fax number for after final communications is 703/872-9310. The receptionist answers 703/308-0661.



S. M. Nolan
Patent Examiner
Technology Center 1700

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